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Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1976BUENOS07429

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Channel: n/a

Case Number: 200000044

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-08 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 L-02 DHA-02

AID-01 PRS-01 /037 W

P R 111755Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7888
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

() In Part (X) In Full DECLASSIFY
() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to
Date Declassify on Reason

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 7429

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, UK
SUBJECT: GOA RESPONDS TO CONGRESSMAN DRINAN'S HUMAN RIGHTS QUERIES
REF: BUENOS AIRES 7348

1. SUMMARY. GOA RESPONDED ON SEVERAL SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS CASES RAISED BY FATHER DRINAN AND LORD AVEBURY NOV. 7 AT SECOND MEETING WITH HIGH LEVEL GOVT OFFICIALS AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY YESTERDAY (NOV. 10) (SEE SEPTTEL.) WHERE ABOUTS OF MONICA MIGNONE REMAIN UNKNOWN. ERNESTO BENADO, WHO IS A NATURALIZED ARGENTINE CITIZEN, AND ARGENTINE JUAN MENDEZ ARE BOTH PRESENTLY IN JAIL FACING CHARGES. HOWEVER, GOA OFFICIALS INDICATED THAT DUE TO CONSIDERABLE US INTEREST, THE INTERIOR MINISTRY HOPED TO HAVE "GOOD NEWS" SOON, I.E. PROBABLY EXPULSION ORDERS FOR XBTH TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. ELEVEN PRIESTS ARE PRESENTLY BEING DETAINED, ALL BUT TWO OF THEM ARGENTINE AND ALL WITH CHARGES PENDING. AN EXPULSION ORDER IS BEING PREPARED FOR IRISH FATHER RICE. FORN MINISTRY OFFICIAL PRIVATELY SUGGESTED TO EMBOFF A WORKING MEETING FOLLOWING THE DRINAN VISIT AT WHICH HE WOULD BEGIN TO PREPARE FULL REPORTS ALL PERSONS IN WHICH USG HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

2. AT A MEETING IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY YESTERDAY (NOV. 10), INTERIOR MINISTRY OFFICIAL RICARDO FLOURET PROVIDED INFORMATION ON SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS CASE RAISED EARLIER BY FATHER DRINAN AND LORD AVEBURY (REFTEL). DESPITE CONSIDERABLE EFFORT ON THE PART OF HER FATHER AND CLOSE FRIENDS IN HIGH POSITIONS, THE CONFIDENTIAL

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WHEREABOUTS OF MONICA MARIA MIGNONE IS STILL UNKNOWN. FLOURET MADE NO ALLUSIONS TO HER POSSIBLE CONNECTIONS TO SUBVERSION (WHICH HE DID IN ALL OTHER CASES MENTION); THE GOVT SIMPLY HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO LOCATE HER. REMARKING ON HER FATHER'S BELIEF THAT SHE IS (OR WAS) BEING HELD BY THE NAVY, FLOURET DID NOT DENY THE POSSIBILITY, BUT INTIMATED THAT THE GOVT (I.E. THE INTERIOR MINISTRY) COULD NOT ANSWER FOR ACTS COMMITTED BY THE NAVY.

3. ERNESTO BENADO REJOVISKY, WHO FLOURET SAID WAS A NATURALIZED ARGENTINE CITIZEN, WAS DESCRIBED AS A LEADER OF THE JCR (REVOLUTIONARY COORDINATING JUNTA INCLUDING ERP, MIR, TUPAMAROS AND OTHER SOUTHERN CONE EXTREMIST GROUPS). HE HAD BEEN ORDERED EXPELLED FROM THE COUNTRY ON JULY 27, 1976, BUT CIVIL JUDGE CARLOS MANUEL GRECO RULED HE COULD NOT BE DEPORTED BECAUSE HE WAS A NATURALIZED ARGENTINE CITIZEN. HE IS STILL IN PRISON, BUT THE INTERIOR MINISTRY HOPES TO HAVE "GOOD NEWS" ON HIM WITHIN THE MONTH (I.E. PROBABLY EXPULSION FROM THE COUNTRY. BENADO APPARENTLY HAS A VISA TO FRANCE.)

4. JUAN MENDEZ STILL HAS THREE CHARGES PENDING AGAINST HIM, INCLUDING AN ARMED ATTEMPT TO OCCUPY A UNIVERSITY BUILDING AND CAR THEFT (HE WAS CLEARED OF ONE CHARGE IN AUGUST). DUE TO SPECIAL US INTEREST IN HIS CASE, FLOURET AGREED TO BRING UP THE MATTER OF MENDEZ'S EXPULSION FROM THE COUNTRY WITH THE INTERIOR MINISTER.

5. FLOURET PRESENTED A LIST OF ELEVEN PRIESTS WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN JAIL. ALL HAVE CHARGES PENDING AGAINST THEM AND IN EVERY CASE THEIR BISHOPS HAVE BEEN FULLY INFORMED. THERE ARE NO FOREIGN PRIESTS CURRENTLY DETAINED SAVE ONE WHO HAS CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST HIM. (FLOURET LEFT OUT IRISH FATHER RICE WHO REMAINS DETAINED BY THE EXECUTIVE. FORMINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF THAT DESPITE SERIOUS CHARGES AGAINST HIM, AN EXPULSION ORDER WAS BEING PREPARED FOR FATHER RICE.)

6. FLOURET READ THE CHARGES PENDING AGAINST SIX ARGENTINE CITIZENS WHO HAD BEEN NAMED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AS PERSONS DETAINED WITHOUT CHARGE UNDER STATE OF SIEGE. MOST OF THE CHARGES INCLUDE POSSESSION OF FIREARMS AND SUBVERSIVE LITERATURE, AMONG OTHERS. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION CONCERNING EXPULSION OF THESE PERSONS FROM THE COUNTRY.

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7. FATHER DRINAN APPEARED TO BE FULLY SATISFIED WITH THE RESPONSES TO HIS SPECIFIC QUERIES. HE DECLINED TO RAISE THE CASE OF DORA GOLDFARB BECAUSE HE WAS NOT PERSONALLY ACQUAINTED WITH THE CASE. LORD AVEBURY DID PASS TO GOVT OFFICIALS A LIST COMPILED BY AI OF HUNDREDS OF PERSONS--INCLUDING POLICE, EXECUTIVES, CIVILIANS, ETC.--EITHER KILLED OR MISSING SINCE JANUARY 1975. GOA OFFICIALS SAID THEY COULD BETTER HANDLE QUERIES ABOUT SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS. THE NAME OF LAWYER MARIO GERARDO YACUB WAS RAISED DURING THE MEETING, BUT NO NEW LIST WAS PRESENTED TO ARGENTINE OFFICIALS FOR RESOLUTION, NOR WAS A LATER MEETING SCHEDULED.

8. FORN MINISTRY OFFICIAL FROM HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP LATER PRIVATELY SUGGESTED TO EMBOFF A WORKING MEETING NEXT WEEK AT WHICH EMBASSY COULD PRESENT FULL LIST OF ALL THOSE PERSONS IN WHICH USG HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST. (TO DATE, EMBASSY HAS PRESENTED INDIVIDUAL CASES AS THE INQUIRIES CAME IN.) HE SAID HE WOULD PROVIDE FULL REPORTS ON EACH CASE KNOWN TO THE GOVT. THIS TIME HE DID NOT EXCLUDE ARGENTINE CITIZENS, WHICH HE HAD EARLIER CLAIMED WOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED BY WORKING GROUP.
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